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Biblical phraseology in CNN publications

Abstract

This paper presents the results of the study of biblical phraseological units (BPUs) found in CNN publications during the period of 2015–2019 (the total of 1643 articles). At the first stage of the experiment, the analysis of 156 BPUs used in the articles demonstrated different distribution of the tokens in CNN rubrics. It was discovered that BPUs in the rubrics “Politics” and “Entertainment” were characterized by considerably higher frequency of occurrence than those in “Style” and “Sports”. At the second stage, specifically designed questionnaire was given to 30 American native speakers to determine the perceptual boundaries of the Bible words. The obtained data revealed indirect correlation between phraseological units frequency of occurrence and the American speakers’ awareness degree of their associative connection with the original source – the Bible: the higher the awareness, the lower the frequency of occurrence. The obtained results enable to assume that the readers do not always identify these units as part of the Holy Scripture, because some BPUs lose their sacred connotations over time. However, journalists often use such units as stylistic means due to their imaginative stylistic and evaluation potential.

Keywords: Bible word, phraseological unit, sacred connotation, frequency of occurrence, mass-media.

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